

Nutrient Synergy For Your Heart

To keep the heart healthy, a combination of a healthy, well-balanced diet, and regular physical activity is required. Nutrients found in food – minerals, phytonutrients, and vitamins – perform better when working with other nutrients, improving nutrient absorption, increasing effectiveness and satiety, and reducing the risk of disease and illness.

Here are a few vitamin-and-mineral duos that can add up to big health benefits.

1. Vitamin B6 with Magnesium

Vitamin B6 helps your body absorb magnesium. To get more vitamin B6, opt for foods that are high in the nutrient, like fish, meat, poultry, legumes, tofu and other soy products, and bananas.

The mineral magnesium, found in nuts, seeds, legumes, and green vegetables like spinach, may help keep your arteries from hardening, regulate your blood pressure, and keep your heart rhythm regular.

2. Sodium and Potassium

Achieving normal blood pressure requires a proper balance of sodium and potassium within the body. Therefore, consuming foods low in sodium while increasing potassium can help lower blood pressure in individuals with hypertension.

Unfortunately, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020–2025, most Americans also don't eat enough potassium. To increase potassium intake, consider incorporating the following potassium-rich foods into your diet: meat, milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes.

3. Vitamin D and Magnesium

Vitamin D requires magnesium to be properly absorbed by the body.

Good sources of vitamin D include cereals and fortified milk, egg yolks, and fatty fish. Good sources of magnesium include almonds, black beans, leafy greens, and sunflower seeds.

4. Iron and Vitamin C

Iron is an essential mineral that helps your body build red blood cells. It comes in two forms: heme (found in meat and seafood) and non-heme (found in plant-based foods).

Animal-based food sources of iron include fish, red meat, poultry, and pork. Iron can be found in plant-based foods, including beans, spinach, nuts, soy products, seeds, and iron-fortified cereals.

The body can absorb non-heme iron better when paired with vitamin C in foods and beverages. Vitamin C is plentiful in berries, broccoli, citrus fruits, leafy greens like spinach and kale, red and yellow peppers, and tomatoes.

5. Vitamin B6 and B12 with Folate

Adequate vitamin B6 and folate intake are associated with a reduced risk of coronary heart disease.

Vitamin B12 is in foods that come from animals, such as eggs, cheese, meats, and milk. Richest sources of vitamin B6 include beef liver, fish, potatoes, and other starchy vegetables. Natural sources of folate come from plant-based foods, including dark green leafy vegetables, beans, peas, and nuts.

6. Omega-3s With Vitamins and Minerals

Omega-3 fatty acids are a type of polyunsaturated fat that can help keep your heart healthy. Your body can't produce the amount of omega-3s you need to survive. So, omega-3 fatty acids are essential nutrients, meaning you need to get them from the foods you eat. Some food sources of omega-3 include seaweed, flaxseeds, chia seeds, and fatty fish.

Many nutrients work best when they're paired with others, enhancing each other's absorption and boosting your overall wellness. Aim to incorporate these dynamic duos in your diet and let your health reap the benefits.